



Newsletter

A Final Fairwell

A WORD FROM
SUPERINTENDENT GRANTHAM



I write this today, my final newsletter article to you in the Northeast District, it has been a very busy two years. I give God praise and honor for the opportunity to be a part of your lives as your Superintendent. I cherish the opportunity to get to know so many of you but lament that my time here has been so short. But, God does provide for us seasons in our lives, seasons which we neither choose not that we have the opportunity to move from. I can see the hand of God at work in the Northeast District as we move into the next season. I have great confidence in Dr. Scott Hagan who will be your new District Superintendent. I see new church starts and fresh expressions of Methodism starting in many communities.

I say a painful goodbye to the churches which have chosen to leave the UMC. I pray God will be at work in you all and that you will serve him well. I also want to say to the churches who have stayed UMC, Thank You. You are part of a church that seeks to help people see and to know the love and grace of God through the person of Jesus Christ. Your work has always been to help people know how much God loves them and to leave the judgment to God...which is where it ought to be. None of us is perfect. We are imperfect people living in an imperfect world and our journey is to grow in the grace God offers us. Please avail yourselves of this grace and offer it to others as well. This world needs to know the love of God more than any other thing. It needs to know about second chances and no condemnation. It needs to know about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross for our redemption. It needs to sing "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound," with fervor and passion. When we do this we do well. I will be praying for all of you. May you be filled with love and compassion, as only Christ is.

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THE *South Georgia* CONFERENCE
NORTHEAST DISTRICT

June 2023



South Georgia Conference Announces District Leadership Restructuring Plan, Proposed Budget Reductions

The South Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church will be undergoing budget reductions to appropriately plan for financial implications as a result of local church disaffiliations. Based upon recent trends and detailed predictions, the annual conference is seeking to decrease its 2024 operating budget in order to maximize its sustainability and viability as an annual conference.

[read more here](#)



Certificate Investments with Missional Impact

Certificate Rates*

- 1-Year = 3.00%
- 2-Year = 4.00%
- 3-Year = 3.75%
- 4-Year = 3.50%

**Highest Rate in 10 years

[more info here](#)

*Rates as of January 2023. All rates are subject to change without notice. Please call the Foundation at 770-449-6726.

Your investment in the Georgia United Methodist Foundation's Certificate Program enables churches and nonprofits to expand their missional impact in their community while being better stewards of the resources entrusted to them by God.

The General Church Membership Roll: Staying Connected to the Present and Future Ministry of the UMC

Disaffiliations from The United Methodist Church in the past year have left some faithful United Methodists who want to stay part of the denomination without a church home. In response, South Georgia Conference leadership has worked to make sure there is a place to call "home" - at least temporarily.

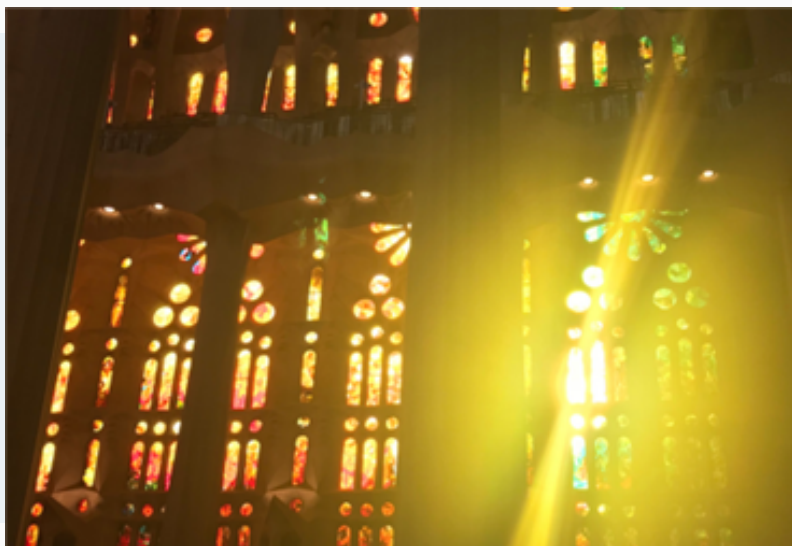
If the church where someone currently holds their membership is disaffiliating from The United Methodist Church and they have not yet found a new church, the Conference has created a mechanism to move membership to the General Church Membership Roll. The General Church Membership Roll is designed for those individuals who wish to remain active in The United Methodist Church by supporting it with their prayers, their presence, their gifts, their service, and their witness.

[read more here](#)



Camp Connect, the camping ministry of the South Georgia Conference, gives children and youth from rising 4th grade through rising seniors in high school the opportunity to spend a week away from normal everyday life in the beauty of God's creation. Diving into scripture and sharing life stories will show campers they are created in God's image and for a purpose. Five camps are scheduled for the summer; one week for high school students; two weeks for middle school students and two weeks for elementary students. Held at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons Island, the week-long camps run from June 12 through July 21. Our prayer is that every camper will have the opportunity to encounter Christ in a powerful, life-changing way during their week at camp! For more information, visit www.campconnectumc.org.

Bishop Graves Delivers Hope for a New Season, Oversees Special Session to Vote on Disaffiliations



The South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church ratified 193 local church disaffiliations at its special called session held online Sunday, May 21, 2023.

Bishop David Graves, episcopal leader of the South Georgia Conference, opened the 158th session of the South Georgia Annual Conference with a message of hope to the 274 congregations remaining with the conference.

Recognizing that disaffiliation conversations have consumed so much time and focus for our United Methodist Churches in this season, Bishop Graves said “it is time” to put our focus on those in our communities who feel this day they have no hope.

“This is heavy. This is overwhelming. At times it is paralyzing. But it is time for us to focus on reaching out and reaching new people,” said Bishop Graves. “We need to be people who are proclaimers, to put our focus on mission and ministry, to make disciples, and to change our corner of the world where people see the light in the midst of the darkness, hope in the midst of hopelessness, and we are viewed as people of integrity.”

Provisions passed at the called 2019 Special Session of the General Conference outlined in paragraph ¶2553 of the United Methodist Book of Discipline and two policies passed during the 2019 South Georgia Annual Conference session – a [Disaffiliation Policy](#) and a [Pension Liabilities Proposal](#) – laid the groundwork for churches to disaffiliate. The Book of Discipline is the denomination’s book of law, doctrine, and policy.

Per the policies adopted, once each congregation pays their pension liabilities, two years of apportionments - which are the local congregation’s responsibility to support the regional, national and global ministry of The United Methodist Church, and any legal fees involved, they will be released from the trust clause and will own their property. Now that the disaffiliation requests have been ratified by a simple majority of clergy and lay members of the South Georgia Annual Conference, these congregations have until June 30 to completely fulfill their disaffiliation agreement with the Conference Trustees.

“Today is a day of sadness in the life of the South Georgia Annual Conference,” said Bishop Graves. “We grieve in saying farewell to the 193 churches disaffiliating from The United Methodist Church and wish them the best in ministry. We pray for these churches as they navigate ministry in a new season.

[learn more here](#)



EVENTS & NEWS

Epworth by the Sea

Mission U (UMW/UWF)

July 14-16, 2023

[learn more here](#)

Camp Connect

June 12-July 21, 2023

[learn more here](#)

Lay Planters Training - Falls 2023

Here in South Georgia, we are seizing the opportunity to start new things for new people in new places. We are seeing a resurgence of grassroots efforts among our laity to dive deeply into disciple-making using new models for church planting like home churches, fresh expressions and more. Can you imagine what it will be like in a few years when laity across the conference will be engaged in leading discipleship efforts across the conference? These discipleship groups and home churches will be able to meet in all kinds of places, made up of all kinds of people. Coming up on July 22, we will have an informational zoom session to find out more about an online Lay Planter's Course we will be offering this Fall to interested laity. Coming to the meeting doesn't commit you to the course; it's an opportunity to hear more about it.

[read more here](#)

Immersion Certified Lay Ministry Class

The Office of Connectional Ministries is excited to announce a summer week-long immersion class June 19-23, 2023, at St. Simons United Methodist Church. This course is designed to dig into the basics of ministry, including worship, discipleship, preaching, leadership, pastoral care, and so much more. This is a great time for leaders who don't have extended time during the year to join together for a quick and thorough walk through of the materials.

To learn more or register for this event, visit www.sgaumc.org/certifiedlayministrytraining.

For questions, contact Anne Bosarge at abosarge@sgaumc.com.

Annual Conference Special Offering to Benefit Church Planting and Revitalization



In January 2023, Bishop David Graves, episcopal leader of the South Georgia Annual Conference, announced a new priority for the conference: church planting and revitalization.

"God has opened up new windows of opportunity to plant and revitalize churches," said Bishop Graves. "With a renewed sense of commitment, I believe God is calling the South Georgia Conference to new and abundant life."

During the 2023 Annual Conference session, South Georgia United Methodists will have the opportunity to support this renewed initiative to plant and revitalize congregations all across the South Georgia Conference through a special offering.

Offerings will help with three objectives: planting new United Methodist Churches in areas where there are not UMC churches, strengthening churches nearest to those areas, and inviting and equipping all the churches of the South Georgia Conference to experience revival and renewal in Jesus Christ.

[read more here](#)

FATHER'S DAY
WESLEY GLEN MINISTRIES

For Father's Day this year, help us root for James and his team as he competes in the World Games in Berlin, Germany!

Your gift to Wesley Glen Ministries, will allow us to continue offering robust Special Olympics and health and wellness programming for James and all of his fellow competitors.

Click the QR code below or go to wesleyglenministries.org to donate online. Or mail a check to WGM, 4580 N Mumford Rd, Macon, GA 31210.

Georgia Pastors School

Georgia Pastors School is set for July 17-20, 2023, at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simons Island. This spiritual formation event for pastors will feature Rev. Juanita Rasmus, co-pastor of St. John's United Methodist Church in Houston, TX, and Johnny Sears from The Upper Room as this year's teachers.

[more information here](#)



SETUP MEETING



June 27th, 2023



6:30pm



Pittman Park UMC

RSVP by June 16th
(email or call District office)

Important Dates

- June 4-6 Annual Conference
- June 14 Moving Day
- June 18 Father's Day
- June 19-23 Lay Ministry Class
- June 27 Setup Meeting @ PPUMC
6:30pm
- July 14-16 Mission U (UMW/UWF)
- July 17-20 Georgia Pastors School

BIRTHDAYS

- June 4th - Monice Holloway
- June 7th - Janet Odegaard
- June 12th - Lee Way
- June 15th - Mira Barrett
- June 17th - Charles Cravey
- June 18th - Martha Wells
- June 20th - Pat Maddox
- June 23rd - Sue Diebolt
- June 30th - Julie Hagan

ANNIVERSARIES

- June 1st - Scott and Missy Brenton
- June 3rd - Scott and Julie Hagan
- June 5th - Larry and Sunshine Bird
- June 6th - Jose and Lori Velasquez
- June 10th - Janet and Jeffery Odegaard
- June 12th - David and Patsy Blalock
- June 18th - John and Cyndee Drake
- June 20th - Jimmy and Susan Cason
- June 23rd - Kenneth and Jean Griffin

Georgia United Methodist Newsletter

Check out the latest news at

www.gumf.org

Sign up at www.gumf.org/stay-connected to have the latest news delivered right to your inbox.

To learn more about GUMF's faith-based financial solutions for investing, lending, training, and planned giving, please call

770-449-6726 or 478-256-7130

(South Georgia) or email info@gumf.org.

PRAYERS, CONCERNS, & PRAISES

Lexy McRae - granddaughter of Rev. Chris Ramsey

The Family of Carol Collins

Rev. Perry Medley

Rev. Jeane Strudivant

Rev. Ricky Varnell - retired

Preaching Schedule & Moving Day

In an effort to encourage clergy to take a Sabbath break, the Bishop and Appointive Cabinet invite all clergy, especially those who are projected to move to a new appointment, to observe the following:

- Preach in Local Churches as Scheduled – June 4, 2023: For Clergy moving to a new appointment, you are encouraged to make this your final preaching Sunday in your current appointment.
- Pulpit Supply Sunday – June 11, 2023: Clergy are encouraged to coordinate with their SPRC to have retired clergy or lay supply fill the pulpit to preach this Sunday. All clergy are invited to participate in this Sabbath break but clergy on the projected move list are strongly encouraged to do so.
- Moving Day – June 14, 2023

Annual Conference Session Information

Annual Conference Meeting Dates

The 2023 regular session of the South Georgia Annual Conference is set for June 4-6 at UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center in Tifton, Ga, during which Bishop Graves will fix the appointments for 2023-2024. Also, we have a called session of the Annual Conference set for May 21, 2023, at 4:00pm, to be held by Zoom.

Annual Conference Materials

All Annual Conference materials for the 2023 session will be placed on the conference and district websites to download and print or save to an electronic device prior to Annual Conference. The Book of Recommendations will also be available to order at a minimal cost through lulu.com. All clergy for whom we have an email address will receive a notification when Annual Conference materials are available. If an email address was entered during Charge Conference season for the lay member to Annual Conference from your church that person will receive an email as well. However, clergy are requested to check with the church's lay member of Annual Conference to make sure they receive all of the Annual Conference materials. Information will also be included in the district newsletter and conference communications.

Apportionments

Thank you for your continued faithfulness in giving to the mission and ministry of The South Georgia Conference and The United Methodist Church. The final day to make payments on your local church's 2022 apportionments is January 6, 2023. Payments must be turned into the Administrative Services Office by this date. As a reminder, there are electronic means available in which to pay apportionments.

Statistical Tables Information

The Statistical Tables will launch on January 10, 2023, and must be completed by February 28, 2023. Statistical tables will be filled out through the new ACstats website. Login information will be emailed to the pastor and treasurer/financial secretary in early January.

The South Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church is writing a new chapter in its story as it looks ahead to mission and ministry in this next season.

Bishop David Graves, episcopal leader of the South Georgia Conference, has expressed his great hope for the future of the South Georgia Conference. While it may be smaller in number, he says, he knows that numbers do not tell a full story nor define a church's ability to bear witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Bishop Graves is excited to announce that the Revs. Jeremy Alexander, Stephanie Smith, and Matt Waldron will serve the conference as ministry cultivators. These three cultivators will continue to serve an appointment in the local church in addition to this ministry strategy work. They officially began their work May 8, 2023.

Ministry Strategy Team Announced, Conference Leadership Focuses on Future



I write to invite you to our District Set-Up meeting on Tuesday, June 27 at 6:30 PM. It will be held at Pittman Park UMC (1102 Fair Road, Statesboro GA 30458) in their Fellowship Hall. We will enjoy a meal together before discussing our mission together and ways to thrive in achieving it, the calendar for the upcoming year, and allow time for fellowship and the blessings of being together.

I have found that the Connection of our Church has cared for and carried me over the years of serving in the local church. Set-up meetings have offered me the chance to reconnect with colleagues and meet new people. I have especially appreciated when they help me understand expectations so I am on the same page with fellow servants in the Kingdom. This is my plan for the evening.

To the important question of who is invited.

This meeting is required for all appointed persons (Elders, Deacons, Local Pastors, Lay Supply). Email me if you have a conflict (scott@sgaumc.com).

We would love spouses to attend and connect for a few moments together.

Children are welcome to join us for the meal, and then play together under the guidance of Safe Sanctuaries approved nursery workers from Pittman Park during the meeting.

Retired clergy and their spouses are welcomed to attend, as well. Finally, we would love to have Administrative Assistants or anyone who assists with the record-keeping of charge conference to join us. We will share some of the improvements to how we will handle Charge Conference forms and data that they will want to hear.

-Rev. Dr. Scott Hagan

Incoming Superintendent, Coastal & Northeast Districts of the South Georgia Conference

[Please fill out this form to RSVP](#)

Congratulations to all of our Graduates!

